

Citizen's Academy Summit Agenda

2/1/05

Part I: Beach Walk

Early this spring, Clearwater will begin construction of Beach Walk, a \$15-million beautification project on south Clearwater Beach. When complete, the project will include sidewalks, roadway improvements and landscaping on Coronado Avenue and a winding roadway and pedestrian promenade along the beach that will replace the existing South Gulfview. Project timeline is 42 months (3-1/2 years) to complete. Details can be seen in the accompanying materials.

To date, we have held three meetings to share the construction phasing and gather input from Clearwater residents and business owners about managing the project. Specifically, we are interested in community-based suggestions on how best to manage difficulties that a construction project of this length and scope will create.

Issues have been divided in to five basic areas of focus:

- 1) Transportation/Parking
- 2) Access/Wayfinding
- 3) Business Support
- 4) Tourism Support
- 5) Communication

Following are some of the key questions that have been asked during our meetings:

- 1) **Why is the construction schedule 42 months?**
The project is being completed in phases in order to maintain through traffic throughout the project and minimize disruption on the beach. This timeline allows the city and the contractor to maintain the maximum amount of parking and vehicular traffic for the duration of the project.
- 2) **When will parallel parking be restored on Coronado?**
After the project is complete and there is traffic flowing on both roadways. Coronado will be modified to four lanes to accommodate additional north-south traffic during construction on South Gulfview, and then returned to three lanes with parallel parking at the completion of the project.
- 3) **Will the project remove parking from Coronado businesses?**
Several businesses on Coronado are using city right-of-way for back-out parking. Most of these will no longer have this right-of-way available after the project is complete. This right-of-way will be used to add sidewalks and landscaping to the road. Some, however, may still have enough private land outside of the right-of-way to maintain parking.
- 4) **Are we permanently losing the parking currently located between the Pier 60 and Adam's Mark (now Radisson) lots?**
No. This parking will be replaced with 400 new public parking spaces in the Hyatt development, with a pedestrian walkover to the beach. Additional new parking is anticipated to be included in the development of the hotel project immediately to the north of the Hyatt and in a possible future project on the north end of the beach.

- 5) **Are you working with the Hyatt on construction schedules?**
Yes. Representatives of the city have worked on a timeline with the Hyatt developers to ensure that both projects are completed within the same time frame in order to minimize ongoing construction issues on the beach.
- 6) **What plans do we have to accommodate increased pedestrian traffic from the north and south from Coronado to the beach?**
Crosswalks on Coronado will be part of the final design. Temporary crosswalks, as suggested, will be considered as part of the bid documents based on staff analysis. Coronado will have the capacity to accommodate additional pedestrians once complete, as sidewalks will be widened as part of the project. In addition, cross-streets from Coronado to the beach will be kept open for access during most of the construction, unless utilities relocation requires temporary closure.
- 7) **Will shuttle frequency be increased to accommodate those parking further away (such as Sand Key Park and the approach to the beach)?**
We are currently working with PSTA and the Jolley Trolley service to define solutions that will increase the frequency of pickups, particularly from alternate parking locations and during peak times.
- 8) **What is going to be done to manage rumors that may keep tourists away from Clearwater Beach?**
We are actively working with both Chambers and the Convention and Visitors Bureau to create a strategy for maintaining visitors. Locally, the Clearwater Beach Chamber has webcams and frequent website visitors and will showcase the status of the project and the fact that the beach is as beautiful as ever. The Regional Chamber has enlisted the assistance of the Glasure Group PR agency to manage local public relations and increase press visitation to the beach. Nationally and internationally, The CVB attends frequent trade shows and is in the process of hiring PR agencies in the UK and in central Europe to help boost the media presence in these critical markets.

Today, we would like to get input from Academy graduates regarding proposed solutions and new ideas. Following is a summary of ideas from the previous meetings:

Transportation/Parking

- Work with PSTA & Jolley Trolley to increase frequency of shuttles.
- Monitor and adjust signalization.
- Create through traffic routes in the Eastshore and Hamden areas.
- Create off-site parking in downtown and Sand Key Park with trolleys and/or ferries to the beach.
- Increase law enforcement presence. Use police aides/volunteers to augment PD and communication efforts.
- Promote Hamden as an alternate North/South route
- Make Hamden/Coronado a one-way pair.
- Make Mandalay/Poinsettia or Poinsettia/Eastshore a one-way pair.
- Use both bridges as a one-way pair.
- Give incentives or special access for employees or residents of the beach.
- Use/promote Causeway for parking east of the roundabout.
- Shuttle construction workers to site.
- Conduct a traffic study to define residential traffic patterns.

- Hire a traffic consultant from Disney or other tourist destination.
- Remove parallel parking on S. Gulfview Boulevard.
- Consider increasing accommodations for bicyclists and pedestrian traffic.
- Remove beach roundabout.

Communication

- Establish a hotline and e-mail comment/question line with immediate feedback. Need one phone number for people to call—should be a staffed number.
- Partner with regional 5-1-1 system to provide information.
- Hold pre-construction meetings and “hard hat” meetings during construction.
- Tell residents of problems/stages/road closures in advance. Need to identify a vehicle to update on progress and changes.
- Use local traffic reporters.
- Hold weekly or bi-weekly meetings with developers, businesses, city and contractor to identify and resolve construction-related issues.
- Provide real time traffic updates/webcams.
- Establish an agreement with a local radio station to give up-to-date traffic and construction info.
- Start up the local AM radio station again.
- Put renderings/information on barrier fence around Hyatt construction.
- Get endorsements from local businesses and visitors.
- Create a key message for use at construction site, ex. “Paradise is Coming.”
- Have certain organizations pay for advertising about project
- Post Beach Walk drawings in key areas—make sure they rotate as they fade.
- Use sign at Harborview for project/traffic info.
- E-mails to homeowner associations.
- Have a presence on-site to answer questions/hear concerns, perhaps with volunteer “ambassadors” to explain the project.

Access/Wayfinding

- Coordinate wayfinding signage with contractor.
- Provide signage indicating location/access to beach businesses and beach access points.
- Place temporary lighted crosswalks on Coronado to ease pedestrian flow to the beach from trolleys and alternate parking locations.
- Provide reasonable drop-off locations for beach visitors.

Business Support

- Form a committee of business owners, city staff and the contractor to anticipate/resolve issues quickly and efficiently throughout the project.
- Meet with business owners from the Mandalay and Drew Street projects to learn from their experiences.
- Contact legislators, Enterprise Florida or the SBA to explore alternative funding and/or tax relief for small businesses affected by construction.

Tourism Support

- Send “dimensional mailer” to external markets.
- Talk to contacts and tourism officials in Tampa, Hillsborough and other nearby markets to cross-promote.
- Advertise in key tourism markets to provide info and create a buzz.
- Place advertisements, kiosks, information at regional malls and other high-traffic regional locations.

- Coordinate efforts between CVB, Chambers and hotels with a message that “the beach is still here, and it’s still beautiful.”
- Provide free Beach Walk postcards to local hotels and beach businesses for visitors to send home to family and friends.

Part II: Downtown Redevelopment

As you may know, Opus South Corporation (www.opuscorp.com), an international development company, has acquired an option to purchase the Calvary Baptist Church properties immediately to the north and south of City Hall between Osceola Avenue and the Bluff. They have expressed an interest in building a mixed-use development with residential, retail and public use. In order to realize their concept, they have expressed an interest in purchasing the City Hall property, as well. Any sale of the City Hall property would require a referendum of the voters.

As representatives of the community, we would like your thoughts and ideas about this project. Specifically, we would like to know what kind of project, amenities and – of course – financial arrangement would be acceptable to you as voters if this sale and the subsequent project were proposed. City officials have already expressed that any buyer would be obligated to pay market price for the property.

- Would you support the relocation of City Hall to another site?
- Would you support the relocation of City Hall elsewhere on the existing site?
- What types of uses would be most appealing to you?
- Would the construction of parking as part of the project make a difference?
- What do you think are the challenges in building community support for this type of proposal?
- What are your feelings about the historic sanctuary (dome) on the Calvary property? Could it be relocated? Could it be relocated to the waterfront?
- Is height an issue? What would be an acceptable height?
- What other public amenities would be important to you?
- Could a referendum to build a downtown marina be included as an additional question? Do you think a second question would help or hurt chances of passage?
- Would you be willing/interested in participating in focus groups with the developer to refine the concept or designs?

Thank you for agreeing to participate, and we look forward to an active dialogue. As ambassadors, we encourage you to share this information and relay any additional thoughts or suggestions you may hear from your friends and neighbors. You can send these comments directly to Douglas.Matthews@myclearwater.com or call 562-4661.